

LOCAL GOVT-RELATED ORDINANCE

Seek people's opinion before approval

Speakers urge CG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday called upon the caretaker government (CG) to seek people's opinion before approving any ordinance related to the local government saying that it should be published in the media.

The goal of strengthening the local government bodies, which is essential for democracy, will not be successful unless people's opinions are incorporated and their involvement is ensured in the whole process, they said.

The press conference was organised jointly by the Governance Coalition and 27 other

organisations at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) in the city.

Dr Quazi Kholiqzaman Ahmad, president of Bangladesh Economic Association, said only strengthening of the local government will not do, it will have to be made functional for strengthening democracy and country's development as well.

Electing parliament members is not enough for democracy, participatory and democratic structure in the local government will have to be ensured for this, he added.

"It is not possible to make the local government bodies functional until its elected representatives have the power and money

and are free from the influence of government officials," he said, adding a part of national budget will have to be allocated for local government so that it does not have to depend on the finance ministry.

Dr Kholiqzaman said to make the local government functional, which is necessary to strengthen democracy, it is essential to take people's opinion.

"We will not be able to know anything about the ordinances related to the local government unless it is published in the media," he said, adding if the local government-related ordinance is promulgated secretly it would be one-sided

and may not go with the democratic process.

Dr Kholiqzaman stressed on publishing the ordinance in the media apart from website since very few people have the access to Internet.

He said since the present caretaker government is not a representative government it should include all to make the institutions functional.

Mohsin Ali, coordinator of the Governance Coalition, Abdus Sukur, national project coordinator of Governance Coalition, Ajar Ali Sabri of Action Aid Bangladesh and Dr Kajal Chatterjee of Prip Trust also spoke on the occasion.

7,500 mts of Indian rice on way to Ctg port

UNB, Dhaka

As part of the Indian government's announcement of supplying 15,000 metric tonnes of rice to Bangladesh during March-April 2008, a commercial vessel carrying 7,500mt of rice is presently bound for Chittagong Port.

Earlier, some 5,000 mt rice was delivered to the government and the supplies were effected through eight shipments by Indian Naval vessels between December 2007 and January 2008, said an Indian High Commission release.

India announced an assistance of 40,000 mts of rice, 10,000 mts of wheat and 1,000 mts of skimmed milk powder in 2007 for relief and rehabilitation of people of Bangladesh affected by floods and other natural disasters.

As part of the commitment, India supplied 1,000 mts of skimmed milk powder during February and March 2008 to Bangladesh.

The aforesaid quantity of skimmed milk powder is being distributed by the Relief and Rehabilitation Department of Food and Disaster Management Ministry of Bangladesh through their network to cyclone-affected areas in southern Bangladesh.

FEMALE WORKERS

Resource centres for safe migration soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Female migrant resource centres will be established under the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) to ensure their safe migration, said the speakers at a workshop yesterday.

At the project inception workshop at Biam auditorium in the city, said in the first phase a female migrant resource centre will be established in the capital and then in six divisions under a project titled 'Establishment of Female Migrant Workers Resource Centre.'

"The risk for female migrant workers could not be reduced even after the formulation of code of conduct for recruiting agencies," said Mohammad Abdul Matin, secretary to expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry, adding that it is now important to develop skill and productivity of the aspirant migrant workers along with increased advocacy.

"Usually people migrate to eradicate poverty. But if he or she becomes more vulnerable and poverty stricken due to migration, its purpose would be meaningless," he added.

While speaking as chief guest, Matin stressed the need for raising education level of female migrant workers and the involvement of local representatives to create



Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Secretary Mohammad Abdul Matin Chaudhury addresses a workshop at Biam auditorium in the city yesterday.

awareness to reduce the possibility of being cheated.

Meanwhile, the government has opened expatriate welfare centre at district level, which would bring positive results in this regard, he added.

Hazrat Ali, additional director general of BMET, said it is a must to ensure safe female migration as contribution of female migrant workers is still comparatively low due to risk factor.

Mohammad Nurul Islam, director of BMET, said the government

has already promulgated new rules for female migration.

The training of female migrant workers has been strengthened while safe houses have been established at Bangladesh Missions abroad, he added.

Organised by Unifem, the workshop was also addressed by its National Programme Manager Naheed M Ahmed and BMET Director Mohammad Selim Reza.

Representatives from different organisations working for safe migration attended the workshop.

Draft of pvt university act finalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman yesterday said the draft of amended private university act was finalised and it would be placed at cabinet meeting at any time for approval.

He told this to the reporters after a meeting of Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco at the secretariat.

Caretaker government has taken the initiatives to amend the law passed in 1992 in the wake of allegations that many private universities are involved in unholly practices like selling certificates and offering sub-standard education.

Explaining the condition of the quality of education, Zillur said there were five posts for Bangladesh in the Unesco headquarters, but three of them had been lying vacant for 23 years, as qualified candidates were not available.

Coaching centres will be brought under the purview of the ordinance, he also said.



Indian Chief Information Commissioner Wajahat Habibullah speaks at a roundtable at Brac Centre Inn in the city yesterday. On his left are Kamal Uddin Ahmed, Shaheen Anam and Feroq Sobhan. (Story on Page 1)

Edn expo, job fair begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A four-day 'Global education expo' and 'Jobs and career fair-2008' will begin at Bashundhara Exhibition Centre in the city tomorrow.

Students will get admission information of different public and private universities and job seekers will receive recruitment information of different local and multinational companies from the fair.

Representatives of 10 local private universities and 50 international universities from 12 countries will set up their stalls to provide information to the students and job seekers.

Event Touch Bangladesh will organise the programme.

The fair will remain open from 10:00am to 5:00pm and entry fee is Tk 10.

BCL factions locked in feud

A CORRESPONDENT

Two factions of Bangladesh Chhutra League (BCL), the student wing of Awami League (AL), yesterday were locked in a feud on the Dhaka University (DU) campus over the schedule of its next national council.

The rival faction that was deprived of posts in the central committee intercepted BCL President Mahmud Hasan Ripon on central library premises at 1:00pm following a demonstration that demanded immediate release of AL President Sheikh Hasina.

The renegade activists demanded Ripon declares the date of the national council then and there.

BCL DU unit President Sohel Rana Tipu, General Secretary Sajjad Saqib Badsha and other activists of DU unit

tried to speak for Ripon but the two factions started exchanging heated words.

Sensing trouble, Ripon left the place by a motorcycle after half an hour.

Earlier, BCL leaders at a rally demanded unconditional release of Hasina and her proper treatment.

Ripon demanded the government lifts the state of emergency adding that, "BCL will not accept local government election before the national election. Without the release of Hasina we will not accept election."

Before the rally, BCL Surya Sen Hall President Lablu Mollah Shishir scuffled with F Rahman Hall President Mizanur Rahman over who will stand in the front row.

Photo exhibition at RU begins

RU CORRESPONDENT

A two-day photography exhibition on 'freedom fight of Bangladesh and prohibiting war' began at Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday.

Dhuketu, a cultural organisation of RU, organised the exhibition. Champa Samadder, wife of martyred RU teacher Prof Sukh Ranjan Samadder, inaugurated the exhibition.

In her inaugural speech Champa urged the government and demanded immediate trial and punishment of war criminals.

She also urged the students to research about country's glorious history including language movement and liberation war.

It will also organise a discussion tomorrow to mark the Independence Day.

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